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 How to get your kids to say “More turnips please”!
Posted by What's Cooking team, September 29th, 2011

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In Canada our climate often makes it difficult to eat fresh and local produce all year long. Once harvest time is over in the fall, we start the count down until we won't have any fresh garden vegetables left. Some veggies have a longer shelf life than others. Winter squashes, for example, can last several weeks, and root vegetables are also known for their endurance. That's why turnips are a great alternative when you are looking to add a new side dish to your repertoire.

The bitter flavour of the turnip is sometimes a difficult one to overcome, especially for the younger taste buds. Here a few suggestions for taking turnip and turning it into a dish that your whole family will enjoy:

Soup or stew. This is the easy route; just peel and slice your turnip in to ½ inch cubes and add them to any beef or chicken stew recipe, or any broth based soup. Their flavour will mix nicely with the flavours of other ingredients, and the kids won't even notice they are there.

Mashed: For many, turnip mash is a standard side dish at Thanksgiving. Probably because back in the day turnips were stored for months down in the root cellar, so still accessible in October. Grandma's recipe was straight turnips boiled in water and mashed...so bitter! But a modern spin on it calls for 9 chopped turnips, ¼ cup of diced onion, and then once these are boiled until tender, drain and mash in a brick of cream cheese, a 1/3 cup of milk and a little salt, butter and paprika to your taste. It's yummy enough that the kids actually ask “more turnips please”!

Roasted: Another way to make turnips is to cut them into wedges (like fries) and coat them with a little olive oil, and spices of your choices (eg. herbs de Provence) , do the same with other root vegetables, like potatoes and carrots, even rutabagas, then lay them on a baking sheet and bake in the oven them until golden.

Do you have a favourite way to cook turnips? Let us know!

The research team

Keywords : roasted turnips, turnip purée, turnips, vegetable side dishes

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An introduction to kale, for many of us a complete stranger

Posted by What's Cooking team, October 20th, 2011

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It might seem a little strange to be talking about a green leafy vegetable in the middle of fall, but Kale is no ordinary cabbage! In Canada, kale is definitely one of the lesser known vegetables; and not always so easy to find in grocery stores. But I highly recommend that people take the time to get to know kale a little bit better. For instance, did you realize that kale actually prefers cold weather? It loves to grow up here north of the 49th parallel! In fact, Kale is said to have a sweeter and more pronounced flavour after it has gone through a frost.

This characteristic has made Kale a favourite ingredient in some traditional fall and winter meals in several Nordic countries.

In the Netherlands for example, there is a wintertime meal called "Stamppot"; a dish great for putting some meat on your bones. It includes potatoes, sausage and kale as main ingredients.

The Irish have a traditional Halloween dish, *colcannon*, which also calls for potatoes and kale, and is usually served with sausages (apparently these three ingredients are a winning comfort food combination).

A Christmas buffet staple in Sweden, Denmark and Holland is the creamed kale dish called *grönlingkål* (usually served as a side to pork). Until the middle ages, kale was one of the most common green vegetables in Europe, and is still very popular there today.

In these traditional recipes the kale is boiled along with other vegetables, but this is not the best way to benefit from its amazing nutritional properties. Did I mention that kale is a wonder food? It's right up there with broccoli! The ideal way to cook kale is by lightly steaming it, or stir frying isn't bad either. Then you can toss it with a little Asian-style dressing, some toasted almonds and pepper flakes. So simple yet so delicious!

Are you already familiar with kale? If so, how do you like to prepare it?

The Research Team

Keywords : fall vegetables, fresh vegetables, local produce, nutritious



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A festive hot toddy this holiday

Posted by What's Cooking team, December 21st, 2011

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Just a couple more days and the holiday season will be in full swing. We've offered up some ideas for interesting menu ideas but what do you do about beverages?

The hot toddy is a tradition that goes quite a way back, and is defined basically as a mixed drink that is served warm (alcohol is optional). This would be a great way to add some warmth and cheer to your holiday party. There are many versions out there: mulled wine, spiced cider... but if you want to make a visual splash, give this idea a try:

Get out that old, rarely-used fondue pot out of the cupboard, and dust it off. Make a batch of Cherry Pomegranate Mulled Cider (see below). Fill the fondue pot and then light the burner, and put the flame as low as it will go, just to keep your punch warm. Then take a bag of fresh cranberries and drop about a cup full into the punch bowl. The beautiful, red and festive looking berries will float on top, adding a special look to your beverage. Since most fondue pots are not that large you will likely have to refill it from time to time.

[Cherry Pomegranate Mulled Cider Recipe](#)

What You Need:

- 4 cups water
- 2 pkt. (3.1 g each) Crystal Light Singles Cherry Pomegranate Low Calorie Drink Mix
- 4 cinnamon sticks
- 8 whole cloves
- 1/2 tsp. ground nutmeg

Make It:

COOK all ingredients in saucepan on low heat 20 min. or until heated through, stirring occasionally. (Do not boil.)

REMOVE cinnamon sticks and cloves; discard.

NOTE it wouldn't hurt to have some dried cinnamon sticks in a mug beside your punch so you can put one in each guest's glass when serving them a drink.

Do you have any special holiday drink recipes you'd like to share with us? We'd love to hear from you.

The Research Team

Keywords : beverages, cider, cranberries, holiday dinner ideas, mulled cider, pomegranate, punch